



MIDWEST TRANSITION TO ORGANIC PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM

Fall Highlights

Partner Spotlight: Michigan TOPP Team

The dynamics of TOPP success in Michigan is a result of the collaboration and partnerships developed by Michigan partners to meet program objectives and support farmers interested in certified organic production. The team in Michigan includes, the Michigan State University Organic Farmer Training Program, Michigan State University Extension, Grand Traverse Conservation District, and Washtenaw County Conservation District, in addition to many other non-profit partners supporting TOPP efforts.

The Michigan TOPP team works together to plan a robust slate of organic education activities and resources, such as: mentorship, field days, farm tours, webinars, workshop and conference presentations, open office hours, and one-to-one technical assistance. Countless success stories demonstrate how the dedicated MI TOPP team has touched Michigan farmers with their expertise, resources, and support whether it was how to successfully transition to organic, or helping ag professionals become more knowledgeable in assisting organic producers, to connecting farmers to available USDA programs and resources.



[**>>> READ MORE >>>**](#)

6 New Episodes of The Taproot Project



The podcast is LIVE! **The Taproot Project** is a collection of stories about people from across the Midwest who are reclaiming farming as a connector—to the land, to a sense of purpose, to people, and to their ancestors.

In the first six episodes you will hear about a queer farmer thriving in rural Iowa, a bison producer restoring prairies and indigenous culture, leaders in Detroit's food sovereignty movement, a grain cooperative-grower-brewer collaboration, the benefits of agroforestry, the joy of fiber farming, **and, more to come!** Follow and listen wherever you get your podcasts.

Success Stories

OFARM Brings Organic Voice to National Roundtable on Soil Health



In July 2025, OFARM participated in the historic “Healthy Soil – Healthy Crops – Healthy People” roundtable on Capitol Hill—representing the voices of American organic farmers. Senator Roger Marshall (R-KS) convened the roundtable to address priorities of the Make America Healthy Again (MAHA) initiative. For the first time, organic producers sat alongside national leaders in agriculture, health, education, and innovation to address the direct connection between soil health and human health.

[**>>> READ MORE >>>**](#)

MW TOPP Collaboration Brings Joy and Learning at the Farmer-Distiller Field Day



In August, OGRAIN had the pleasure of collaborating with a group of talented, young, fifth generation farmers and entrepreneurs, and several MW TOPP partners to host the Farmer-Distiller Grain Connections Field Day in east-central Illinois, bringing together farmers and distillers to learn about the organic grain supply chain. This field day included a morning farm tour, lots of local food, a lunchtime grain chain panel, and afternoon distillery tour.

[**>>> READ MORE >>>**](#)

Iowa State University Provides Organic Technical Assistance in the Field



The Iowa State University Organic Agriculture Program provided educational tours of the organic research and demonstration fields at the Neely-Kinyon Farm in Greenfield for 20 incoming Agronomy students and 12 southwest Iowa Extension staff over the summer. The interactive sessions showcased organic corn, soybean, hybrid rye, and red clover fields. Students and Extension staff learned about managing organic production systems and some of the differences between organic and conventional systems.

[**>>> READ MORE >>>**](#)

Connecting Missouri Growers, Educators, Researchers for a Regenerative Future



The Missouri Organic Association and the University of Missouri-Extension hosted Organics in the Ozarks—a one-day event for producers, researchers, and extension professionals interested in learning more about organic and regenerative agriculture. Farmers shared firsthand experiences, researchers provided data-driven insights, and extension agents helped bridge the two worlds, sparking ideas for future collaboration. This hands-on learning opportunity showed regenerative practices in action—linking scientific understanding with on-farm application.

[**>>> READ MORE >>>**](#)

[**>>> MORE TOPP NEWS <<<**](#)

News & Announcements

Midwest TOPP 2025 3rd Quarter Summary

During Quarter 3 (Jul – Sep 2025), MWTOPP partners made progress on TOPP goals to increase organic across the U.S. The Organic Mentorship program supported **96 mentor pairs** across the 11-state region, and helped **1 new operations transition** to certified organic on **62 new acres**. MWTOPP Partners **offered 1:1 technical assistance to at least 132 producers**, created **40 new resources**, and participated in **100 events** providing a wide-range of resources about organic certification, crop production, markets, and other topics.

National Organic Standards Board Meeting – Rescheduled: January 13-14, 2026



The Fall NOSB meeting has been rescheduled! The meeting was cancelled due to the government shutdown. It will now take place virtually on January 13-14, 2026. No need to resubmit comments, the NOSB has been reviewing submitted comments. If you were planning to give oral comments and won't be able to attend, you have until December 30th to submit on [Regulations.gov](#), docket # AMS-NOP-25-0034 or click [this link](#).

National Organic Farmer Survey – Responses Needed by January 31



The 2025–2026 National Organic Farmer Survey is now open! Organic and transitioning farmers are invited to share their experiences to help guide research, education, and resources that support organic production. Complete the survey to receive a Johnny's Selected Seeds discount and enter for a chance to win farm-focused prizes, including Muck Boots, FELCO pruners, and a consultation with a veteran organic farming expert.

[**>>> REQUEST SURVEY >>>**](#)

Organic Agronomy Training Service: Organic Weed Management in Soybeans



Managing weeds is often the top challenge for organic growers, and one of the main reasons conventional farmers are hesitant to transition. Some farmers accept the weeds, finicky harvests, and lower yields that come with them. Some expect a pass with a hand-hoeing crew to walk their beans. Then there are those rare growers who achieve a high level of organic weed control without any hand labor.

[**>>> READ MORE >>>**](#)

Decade of Proof: Iroquois Valley Shows Organic Can Scale for People and Planet



Iroquois Valley Farmland REIT, PBC, a pioneering U.S. organic farmland investment company, announced over a decade's worth of measurable environmental and economic progress driven by organic agricultural practices. From 2014-2025, the company's network of organic and transitioning farms collectively eliminated an estimated 29 million pounds of synthetic pesticides and herbicides, demonstrating the transformative potential of organic agriculture at scale.

[**>>> READ MORE >>>**](#)

Webinar: Understanding NRCS Cost-Share Programs for Organic Grain Farmers



NRCS cost-share programs can provide funding and insight to improve organic farms. These programs can be confusing to understand and navigate for both organic farmers and advisors. This webinar will break down the programs and practices that are most applicable for organic grain farms and discuss how the cost-share money can help farmers, but even more, how the deeper value is in the process of making high-level plans that help advisors and farmers understand farm operations better.

[">>>> WATCH VIDEO >>>](#)

Improve Sustainability of Organic Vegetable Production with No-Till and Biochar



Sean Stokes, a research director for The Rodale Institute – Midwest Organic Center, discusses the Midwest Vegetables Systems Trial which combines different tillage management systems with biochar as a soil amendment. Learn more about biochar, organic vegetable production in the Midwest, and the various tillage management practices that can benefit soil health and reduce the labor needed for weeding.

[">>>> WATCH VIDEO >>>](#)

Bipartisan Domestic Organic Investment Act



While the U.S. organic sector grew at double the pace of conventional agriculture in 2025 domestic organic production has not kept pace with the growth in demand for organic products. The purpose of the Domestic Organic Investment Act is to create competitive grants for organic producers and manufacturers to invest in increased storage, processing, aggregation, and distribution capacity.

[">>>> READ MORE >>>](#)

Organic Mentorship

We connect transitioning organic producers with experienced organic farmer mentors.

[">>>>BECOME A MENTOR <<<](#) [">>>> BECOME A MENTEE <<<](#)

Find an Accredited Certifying Agent

The National Organic Program provides accurate information about accredited certifying agents on the [Organic INTEGRITY Database \(INTEGRITY\)](#) Organic Certifier Locator.

[">>>> FIND A CERTIFIER HERE <<<](#)

TOPP Organic Resource Library



Upcoming Midwest Events

>>> [VIEW ALL TOPP EVENTS HERE](#) <<<

Dec 16	Webinar: Advancing Regional Organic Markets: A Farmer's Toolkit	FIND OUT MORE
Dec 17	Virtual Open House: Organic Seed Community	FIND OUT MORE
Jan 7-8	Ohio State Organic Grains Conference Sandusky, Ohio	FIND OUT MORE
Jan 8-9	Minnesota Organic Conference St. Cloud, Minnesota	FIND OUT MORE
Jan 9-10	Practical Farmers of Iowa Conference Des Moines, Iowa	FIND OUT MORE
Jan 10	MOFFA Organic Intensives Conference East Lansing, Michigan	FIND OUT MORE
Jan 22-24	OGRAIN Annual Winter Conference Madison, Wisconsin	FIND OUT MORE
Jan 30-31	Organic Association of Kentucky's Annual Organic Conference Frankfort, Kentucky	FIND OUT MORE
Feb 6-7	Missouri Organic Association Annual Conference: Roots to Revenue Columbia, Missouri	FIND OUT MORE
Feb 7	Sustainable Farming Association Annual Conference St. Joseph, Minnesota	FIND OUT MORE
Feb 13-14	47 th Annual Ohio Ecological Food and Farm Association Conference Newark, Ohio	FIND OUT MORE
Feb 26-28	Marbleseed Conference + OFRF Researcher & Extension Meetup La Crosse, Wisconsin	FIND OUT MORE
Mar 3-4	Midwest Grazing and Soil Health Summit Willmar, Minnesota	FIND OUT MORE

About TOPP

MOSA is the Midwest Lead Cooperator for the **USDA Transition to Organic Partnership Program (TOPP)**—a coalition of partners serving producers in **Arkansas, Kentucky, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Ohio, Tennessee, and Wisconsin**. The Midwest Regional Center and its partner organizations will connect farmers transitioning to organic with local, experienced organic mentors; provide farmer training and education; develop and expand access to technical assistance and training; build network and strengthen the organic community; and support workforce training and development. OrganicTransition.org

Midwest TOPP Partners



UW Organic Collaborative
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON



United States Department of Agriculture
Agricultural Marketing Service
National Organic Program
Transition to Organic Partnership Program

